

## **MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

**MAY 6, 2010**

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The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the North Haven Memorial Library, 17 Elm Street, North Haven, CT.

### **Members Present**

First Selectman, Michael J. Freda  
Second Selectman, Timothy M. Doheny  
Third Selectman, Stephen A. Fontana

Mr. Freda thanked the public for attending and advised there will be several presentations this evening. Before proceeding with the presentations, Mr. Freda called for any public comments relative to the agenda. With there being none, he continued with the approval of the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Doheny made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Selectmen's Meeting of April 1, 2010.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Mr. Doheny made a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen of April 19, 2010.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Mr. Freda then introduced Chris Hoffman, Treasurer of Ridge Top Swim and Tennis Club. Mr. Hoffman gave a presentation highlighting the many attributes of the non profit Club, founded in 1958 and located at 556 Skiff Street in North Haven. The club is family oriented, with many activities held on the grounds which include nine tennis courts, olympic sized swimming pool, athletic fields, snack bar, playground facilities, picnic area and basketball courts. Mr. Hoffman answered several questions from the public and invited anyone interested to speak with him further and/or visit the club.

Mr. Freda continued with the agenda by introducing Patricia Donovan, Chief Operations Officer, and Jason Smith, Weatherization Program Manager both of Community Renewal Team, Inc. (CRT). Ms. Donovan explained that CRT is a community action agency working in conjunction with Community Action Agency of New Haven. They have the ability to come into North Haven and bring an opportunity to residents of North Haven who have qualified for energy assistance to also be eligible to receive weatherization within their homes. Weatherization includes anything from the caulking, replacement of furnace, insulation, etc. She explained through funding, they have \$1.8 million dollars allocated to this region. They are looking to find 147 different units that they can assist with weatherization. To date, they have only

worked with five households in North Haven. Jason Smith proceeded with their presentation explaining that they have gone out to public bid for contractors that do weatherization. This is an opportunity for local businesses in the Town to apply to the program and obtain jobs, and they may also be available to receive training through program funding. He went on to describe some of the savings that residents obtain through weatherization, and how that also helps to stimulate the local economy. Patricia stated that she has a Frequently Asked Questions sheet that she has provided to the Selectman's Office for anyone interested and gave phone numbers for additional information. A question was asked if the program would be available to renters and the answer was yes, along with landlord participation.

## **Selectman's Overview**

### Operational Update:

- Bond refinancing has been approved. \$5.2 million callable bonds that we were able to renegotiate bringing our debt structure down.
- \$73, 000 in savings for this fiscal year.
- Annual savings moving forward will be around \$33,000 per year over the course of the next 13 years.
- Looking to renegotiate our vendor contracts for financial savings. We have instituted a 2% cash discount for several of our vendors.
- LED traffic light bulbs being replaced over the next three months.
- 300 separate bulbs over 14 intersections for a total of almost 50 traffic lights.
- Total anticipated savings projected to be approximately \$48,000.

### Economic Development:

- Economic Breakfast Meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn.
  - Working with the Chamber of Commerce
  - Rich LoPresti assisting with coordination
  - United Illuminating is sponsoring the event
  - Looking to enhance relationships with businesses and assist them with reducing their operational costs
  - Bringing in representative from the State to allow business to interact
  - Begins at 7:30 am until about 9:30 am
  - Mr. Freda will also be giving a presentation
  - Also including presentations by the UI and several local banks
- Meeting with local businesses and assisting with various information and contacts
- PC Richards opening, ribbon cutting next week
- Some businesses are struggling with high costs of doing business in Connecticut
- Town Hall is working to create an environment to help businesses
- Marlin Update
  - Met with officials in Hartford
  - Connecticut difficult to do business
  - Final plea to corporate owners
  - Loss of approximately 250 jobs, about 17% North Haven residents
  - \$246,000 tax revenue to the Town of which we will only be able to retain about \$100,000 in real estate taxes
  - Will begin to lose the \$146,000 when phase out begins in June of this year

### Challenges Ahead:

- Revenue decline over the past two years is hurting us.
- Town Budget Hearing on Monday.
- Mill Rate will be presented.
- A very important discussion is needed prior to the referendum.
- Legal issues continue.
- Health insurance solutions are being worked on for the immediate future.
  - Rejected by four other carriers
  - Need to bring the claims history down
  - Through the collective bargaining process need to consider raising copays
  - Implement a Wellness Program
  - Self Insured model not viable at this time
- Biggest issue is we need to grow the top line revenue.
- Developing the Pratt site.
- Town road ways and infrastructure.
  - Approximately 148 miles of roadways that are in poor condition
  - Mapping out a strategy for the future
  - Cost per mile to mill and pave a road is \$200,000
  - Costs of oil per barrel, drives up the cost
  - Looking to see what can be paved without milling, but that is a short term fix
  - Universal Drive will be paved this year with only 10% of the funds coming from the Town

### Good News:

- Many meetings are taking place with prospective businesses
- Discussions are ongoing at the Pratt site
- Managing Health Care for this coming year
- Been able to achieve some savings internally that will help us long term

Mr. Freda ended his presentation by noting that although we are faced with great challenges in North Haven, we will continue to make strides to position our town for future growth and ask residents not to get discouraged. He is very positive and optimistic about the future.

### **Correspondence**

• Radha R. Prasad – Re: Dissolving the Secondary School Building Committee  
Mr. Freda read a letter from Mr. Radha R. Prasad, Chairman of the School Building Committee regarding the dissolution of the Secondary School Building Committee. The letter acknowledged the tremendous contribution of the Committee Members' time, knowledge, skills and devotion over the last eight plus years for the success of the project. He noted some remaining issues and suggested that Attorney Jeffrey Donofrio had the expertise and knowledge to handle those items.

Mr. Freda, Mr. Doheny and Mr. Fontana all thanked the committee for their exemplary job and service to the community.

Mr. Doheny moved to accept Mr. Prasad's letter and dissolve the Secondary School Building Committee.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

- Ray Fowler – Suggestions to Augment Existing Policies

Mr. Freda noted that Mr. Fowler submitted three separate letters pertaining to augmentation of Board and Commission policies.

The first letter pertained specifically to the reappointment of an existing Board and or Commission member as follows:

“In the event an incumbent member of an existing Board or Commission desires reappointment, that member shall announce their intentions to the body. That body shall then, by secret ballot, decide by simple majority vote to endorse or not endorse that member for reappointment. The result of this ballot shall then be forwarded to the Board of Selectmen as ‘endorsed’ or ‘not endorsed’ for reappointment.” The board of Selectmen shall then give that recommendation full consideration when debating the members’ reappointment.

Mr. Fontana suggested we get the opinion of our legal counsel to be sure it does not conflict with our Charter. Mr. Doheny agreed with Mr. Fontana.

The second letter pertained to removal of a Board or Commission member and read as follows:

“Any Board or Commission member may be removed from same for failure to perform, or conform to the standards, expected of a member of these Board or commission for cause.” Several examples were then listed. It was suggested that the process would be that the member shall be referred to the Board of Selectmen in the Town of North Haven, by simple majority vote of the member’s Board or Commission, with recommendation thereto for the members’ dismissal ‘for cause’ with the reason stated. The majority vote of the Selectmen shall then carry.”

Mr. Doheny stated that parts of the suggestion he liked, but he also has some questions both on clarification and process. He would like to get them clarified specifically, to be sure that future Boards would be sure of the policies.

Mr. Fontana also had several concerns regarding specificity of some of the items, and again restated his suggestion for legal counsel, but does think that there is merit to the suggestion.

The third letter pertained to the current policy to appoint a Board or Commission member as follows:

“No person may be appointed to any non elected Town Board or Commission in North Haven without first having submitted to the designated authority, a full resume, and letter of intent, highlighting said persons qualifications, willingness and availability to serve on said Board or Commission. No person shall be appointed until all members of the Board of Selectmen have had time to review same, and make a decision on that person’s abilities. Persons who apply verbally, but fail to follow up in writing as outlined, shall be considered as not having applied.”

Mr. Doheny expressed that he felt Mr. Fowler’s suggestion was worthy and on target.

Mr. Fontana agreed.

Mr. Freda stated that he will consult with the Town Attorney on all three suggestions and will report back. He then thanked Mr. Fowler for his correspondence.

## **Resolutions**

Mr. Fontana read the following resolution:

- **BE IT RESOLVED**: That Michael J. Freda, First Selectman, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of this municipality a contract with the Connecticut State Library for an Historic Documents Preservation Grant.

Mr. Doheny made a motion to approve the resolution as presented.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Mr. Doheny read the following resolution:

- **BE IT RESOLVED**: That Michael J. Freda, First Selectman, be, and hereby authorized to sign the agreement entitled:  
“Agreement between the State of Connecticut and the Town of North Haven for the Development of Contract Plans, Specifications, and Estimates for the Valley Service Road Extension Project utilizing Federal Funds from the High Priority Project’s Program.”

Mr. Doheny made a motion to approve the resolution as presented.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

## **Resignations/Appointments**

- Resignation of LuAnn Buono, 15 Lancelot Drive, from the Economic Development Commission term to expire December 31, 2010.

The Board thanked Ms. Buono for her service and Mr. Doheny made a motion to accept her resignation.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

- Appointment of Todd M. DePino, 70 Ansonia Drive to the Economic Development Commission term to expire December 31, 2010.

Mr. Freda and Mr. Doheny noted Mr. DePino’s qualifications for the position. Mr. Doheny then motioned to accept Mr. DePino’s appointment.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Mr. Freda noted that there is still one position open on this Board and he has asked Mr. Fontana if he has anyone he would like to recommend.

- Reappointment of Dorothy Logan, 2065 Hartford Turnpike, as the Mental Health Coordinator – Catchment Area Council 8 Representative for a two year term to expire May 31, 2012.

Mr. Fontana supported and motioned Ms. Logan’s reappointment.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

Mr. Freda stated that there is a vacancy on the Community Services Commission and suggested if anyone is interested they should submit a resume to Town Hall.

## **Bond Releases / Reductions**

Mr. Doheny motioned to accept the Bond Releases and Reductions as presented.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

- Commercial Realty Associates, Inc., 425 Washington Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473, release of the entire balance in the amount of \$2,500.00 with the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Quality Associates, Inc. 20,23,27,30,35,36 & 40 Del Avenue, North Haven, CT 06473, release of a portion of the balance in the amount of \$100,000.00 with the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Commission.
- DonMar Development, 55 Mill Road, North Haven, CT 06473, release a portion of the balance in the amount of \$125,000.00 with the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Commission.
- DonMar Development, 55 Mill Road, North Haven, CT 06473, release a portion of the balance in the amount of \$50,000.00 with the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Commission

## **Property Tax Refunds**

Mr. Doheny motioned to accept the Property Tax Refunds as presented.

Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes

- Benavides, Rene J., 187 Pool Road, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$106.66, and in the amount of \$32.05
- DCFS, PO Box 685, Roanoke, TX 76262 in the amount of \$224.31, and in the amount of \$339.07
- Eber Bros. Wine & Liquor Corp, 30 Corporate Drive, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$533.24
- GMAC, Louisville PPC, PO Box 9001951, Louisville, KY 40290-1951 in the amount of \$104.37, and in the amount of \$227.59, and in the amount of \$254.81, and in the amount of \$200.26, and in the amount of \$249.48, and in the amount of \$ 170.56, and in the amount of \$106.76, and in the amount of \$87.72, and in the amount of \$113.57, and in the amount of \$269.12, and in the amount of \$ 98.90
- Guan, Yongtao, 15 Windsor Road East, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$274.50, and in the amount of \$274.72
- Nissan Infiniti LT, P.O. Box 650214, Dallas, TX 75265-0124 in the amount of \$231.69
- Novak, Michael A., 22 Tenedine Drive, North Haven, CT 06473 in the amount of \$48.62
- Ryder Truck Rental, Inc., 99 Murphy Road, Hartford, CT 06114-2104, in the

amount of \$1,502.70, and in the amount of \$434.26, and in the amount of \$434.26

- Toyota Motor Credit Corp., Box 105386, Atlanta, GA 30349, in the amount of \$385.83
- VW Credit Leasing, 1401 Franklin Blvd., Libertyville, IL 60048 in the amount of \$97.25

Mr. Freda noted that the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen – Thursday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library Community Room.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Roland Gibson, Highland Park Road a resident for 32 years stated that he and his neighbors have been promised for decades that they would get sewers. He has had to replace his septic system at great expense. He would like to see sewers provided for these residents at the top of the hill, and would like to know if there is any available funding.

Mr. Freda thanked Mr. Gibson and noted that he is a neighbor of his. Mr. Freda understood Mr. Gibson's plight as he noted that he too had to replace his own septic system several times, in several homes in that area; three septic systems at a cost of about \$135,000. Mr. Freda noted that when he moved into the Hartford Turnpike area he was told that sewers could not be put in. He advised Mr. Gibson that he will look into Mr. Gibson's request to see if there is any state funding available.

Mr. Gibson also inquired as to why the Town is sitting on five lots in North Haven on Hartford Turnpike, and wondered what the land was for, and the Town could certainly use the money. The lot numbers are 1056, 1749, 1825, 1525, and 1527.

Mr. Freda advised that he will check with our land department and confirm that the Town does own them and pursue it further.

Mr. Gibson also continued to say that as Vietnam Veteran, when he returned home in 1967, the Town gave him a \$3,000 property tax exemption. He said the exemption has not changed in all those years and feels that the \$72 a year is no longer appropriate for our veterans.

Mr. Freda noted that was a good observation and thanked Mr. Gibson for his comments and for coming to the meeting.

Mrs. Veronica Kivela, 70 Drazen Drive, North Haven, thanked Mr. Freda for his overview on local businesses in Town. She was concerned that our State Representative and Senator did not participate with Mr. Freda regarding the Marlin situation.

Mr. Freda stated that he was remiss in stating in tonight's presentation that both Mr. Fontana and Mr. Fasano were with him in Hartford. He thought he mentioned it in the

previous meeting, but did neglect to mention it this evening that they were both with him at the state and local level.

Ms. Kivela said that she heard that residents of Todd Drive have had their assessments frozen, which she understands, and was wondering what was going on in that area.

Mr. Freda stated that was correct that there has been some net assessments frozen. He went on to say that if those residents wanted to sell their home, they have to put \$40,000 to \$45,000 in escrow in case there is a problem with the septic system in the future. Mr. Freda went on to discuss the Todd Drive issues in greater detail.

Ms. Kivela also stated that she supports our veterans and anything our Town can do to assist them.

Gary Amato, Pool Road, thanked Ms. Sadosky, Director of Public Works, for her good work, especially the 90% funding of the Universal Drive paving project. He said he noted that Mrs. Querfeld is expecting to take some time off before she leaves and was wondering how much money the Town would be paying out to her. Mr. Freda responded that he did not know. Mr. Amato asked if Mr. Freda would make that information available.

Mr. Amato then proceeded to ask several questions on the building inspection in terms of the State Attorney's Office and the Town's internal investigation. Mr. Freda went on to explain in greater detail the aspects of the investigation. The conversation continued for several minutes.

Mr. Ray Fowler, Todd Drive, informed the public that as a resident of Todd Drive, he is well versed in the history of problems and what has transpired in that area. He also feels that with regard to sewers, it will never happen. He discussed the 2007 tax freeze for the residents and how that transpired. He commended Ms. Sadosky and the current administration for their efforts and feels that they have done a considerable amount to inform the residents and try to resolve the problems. Regarding the veteran's issue, he has served, and he also feels it will never happen.

Mr. Leahy, 12 Regency Drive, commented on the New Haven editorial regarding the policy for Town union and non union personnel and their unused sick and vacation time.

Mr. Freda noted that the article did not quite accurately represent the policy. He noted that in time there will need to be changes because some of this is unsustainable.

Mr. Leahy had several questions and comments regarding the health insurance issues including negotiations and the bidding process. Mr. Freda went on to detail the events of the health insurance situation and where we are presently. He noted that in the future we will need to change the plan design, and do a better job of health awareness and wellness.

Mr. Leahy asked why the \$ 70 million bond for the high school was not renegotiated.



Mr. Freda explained that unfortunately it was not callable.

Attorney Jeffrey Donofrio, Ciulla & Donofrio, wanted to provide some information on the High School Building Committee. He advised he had the privilege for the last eight years to provide the legal counsel for the Committee. It was a large part of his practice, and he commended the group of individuals on the committee for the superb job that they did. He went on to say it was a privilege and honor to work with them and they went above and beyond the call. They attended countless meetings and performed unconditionally. He noted that they were high quality individuals who faced a number of challenges, and got the project completed within budget and on time.

Al Warren, Charles Court, asked Mr. Donofrio with the dissolution of the Building Committee, who will take over correcting the problems at the High School, and who will cover the costs of continuing litigation services. Attorney Donofrio advised that the funding for the project is in a project capital account, so any additional expenses that are incurred, are still the responsibility of the project. Future decisions will be made by the Town through the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Warren asked if Mr. Freda looked into the new State program that just came out for prescription drugs. Mr. Freda noted that Mr. Fontana just advised him that there is a new law, and Mr. Freda will be checking into it further.

Mr. Warren asked to clarify who may vote in the referendum. Patricia Jackson Marshall, Democratic Registrar of Voters addressed the question.

Mr. Roland Gibson, Highland Park Road, asked why if years ago water lines were put in around the Hartford Turnpike area, then what is the difference between putting in sewer lines. Ms. Lynn Sadosky, Director of Public Works, discussed the issue relative to a cost analysis, and feels that it may be cost prohibitive at this time. She noted that they have been actively searching for grant sources. Mr. Gibson wondered where the Town found money to build the Town pool, library and running track.

Gerald Feinberg, Brockett Farm Road, asked Mr. Freda several questions relative to the Building Department Investigation. A discussion continued.

He also asked Mr. Freda to expand upon his rationale for the settlement of about \$35,000 made with two former Town employees who had been arrested. Mr. Freda explained in detail the circumstances surrounding this case.

Mr. Sherman Katz, Sherwood Drive, noted that regarding the swimming pool, back many years ago there was a school, Greater New Haven State Technical College, renting the former high school. North Haven had decided to close Orchard Hill School and put it up for sale and the State of Connecticut purchased that. They moved their school into Orchard Hill School (now Gateway Community College). North Haven received about \$5 million dollars and it was decided that since the High School swim team had to use another pool outside of Town that we should use the money for a Town pool. It went to referendum and the people voted.

He also said that he feels badly for those who have lived on Todd Drive for forty or

more years, but those who purchased more recently, may have purchased knowing what they were buying and should perhaps live with it. He gave the example, if you buy a home near the airport, don't complain about the planes.

Mr. Fowler said that he has talked to everyone who bought a home on Todd Drive in the last six years, and not one was advised of the water problem. They were advised at the closing that there was money in escrow that would remain there for ten years in case the system has to be replaced.

Mr. Fowler believes the only solution in that area is pumping stations. They are very costly and connecting to existing stations in that area would cost as much as building new. He went on to discuss the situation.

Mr. Gibson remarked that he was happy that Universal Drive was going to be paved and noted that many roads are in disrepair. Mr. Freda agreed and thinks that maybe as much as 60 miles have to be milled and paved, and at \$200,000 per mile, that is a \$12 million dollar project. He is guessing 60, it may be more. They are spending a lot of time on this issue, and plan on doing a lot of pot of maintenance for the short term. However it needs to be figured out for the future, and they will be working to do that.

Mr. Fontana mentioned that he got an email from a resident concerned about fireworks, and displays going on in people's yards. She wondered what could be done, other than being a police matter. Mr. Fontana asked what if anything could be done as a Board to address this issue and perhaps have something for the next meeting.

Mr. Freda asked if there were any more questions, hearing none and seeing none, he thanked everyone for attending.

Mr. Doheny motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 pm  
Voted: Freda – yes, Doheny – yes, Fontana – yes